

CHAPTER 6

THE YOG OF MEDITATION

Whenever there is rank growth, in the name of dharm, of too many customs and practices, of forms of worship and prayer, and of schools and sects, some great Soul appears, makes his advent to demolish them, and to install and strengthen the one and only God, as also to broaden the path of action that leads to him. The practice of renouncing action and thus of being known for wisdom were also all too prevalent in the age of Krishn. That explains why he affirms, for the fourth time, at the beginning of this chapter, that action is an essential, inevitable requirement of the Ways of both Knowledge and Selfless Action.

He told Arjun in Chapter 2 that there was no more propitious a way for a Kshatriy than to fight. If he loses the war, he will be rewarded with godly existence, while victory will bring him ultimate bliss. Knowing this, he should fight. Krishn further pointed out to him that he had imparted this precept to him in regard to the Way of Knowledge: the precept that he should wage war. The Way of Knowledge does not imply inactivity. While it is true that the initial urge comes from an accomplished teacher himself, the follower of knowledge has to engage in action after self-appraisal and due judgement of the pros and cons, and of his strength. Fighting is thus unavoidable on the Way of Knowledge.

In Chapter 3, Arjun asked Krishn why, when he thought the Way of Knowledge superior to that of Selfless Action, he was prompting him to sinful acts. In the prevailing circumstance he found the Way of Selfless Action more hazardous. Thereupon he was told by Krishn that he had imparted both the ways, but according to the provisions of neither of them is it allowed to go along without

the performance of action. A man does not achieve the state of actionlessness by just not commencing work, nor does he attain to ultimate liberation by abandoning an undertaken enterprise. The ordained process of yagya has to be accomplished for both the ways.

So Arjun was well acquainted with the truth that, whether he prefers the Way of Knowledge or the Way of Selfless Action, he has to act. Yet he again asked Krishn in Chapter 5 which of the two ways was better from the point of view of outcome; And which was more convenient? Krishn replied that both were equally propitious. Both the ways take one to the same goal and yet the Way of Selfless Action is superior to that of Knowledge, because no one can gain yog without acquitting himself of selfless action. The required action is the same in both cases. There is thus now no ambiguity about the fact that one cannot be either an ascetic or yogi without performing the appointed task. The only difference is between the attitudes of the wayfarers who tread along the two ways.

1. **“The Lord said, ‘The man who performs the ordained task without desiring its fruits, rather than the one who just gives up (lighting) the sacred fire or action, is a sanyasi and a yogi.’”**

Krishn insists that only that man has made true renunciation or achieved yog who engages in the one action that is worthy of doing with absolutely no desire for any rewards. No one becomes a sanyasi or a yogi by just desisting from the ordained action. There are many kinds of work, but out of them the action which is fit to be undertaken and which is ordained is only one. And this one action is yagya which means “worship,” the one means for the attainment of God. The practice of it is action; and the man who does it is a sanyasi and a yogi. If a man has just stopped lighting fire or tells himself complacently that he has no use for action because he possesses Self-knowledge, he is neither a sanyasi nor a doer of selfless action. Krishn further speaks about this:

श्रीभगवानुवाचः अनश्रित कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।
स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः ॥ १ ॥

2. **“Remember, O Arjun, that yog (selfless action) is the same as renunciation (knowledge), for no man can be a yogi without a total rejection of desire.”**

What we know as renunciation is also yog, for no man can be a yogi without giving up all his desires. In other words, sacrifice of desire is essential for men who have chosen either of the ways. Superficially it appears so easy, for all that we need to do in order to become a yogi- sanyasi is to claim that we are free from desire. But according to Krishn it is by no means so.

3. **“Whereas selfless action is the means for the contemplative man who wishes to achieve yog, a total absence of will is the means for one who has attained to it.”**

Performance of action to achieve yog is the way for the reflective man who aspires to selfless action. But when repeated practice of the deed gradually brings one to the stage at which the final outcome of selfless action emerges, absence of all desire is the means. One is not rid of desire before this stage; and-

4. **“A man is said to have achieved yog when he is unattached to both sensual pleasure and action.”**

This is the stage when a man is not given to sensual pleasure, nor to action. When the culmination of yog is once reached, who is there beyond to strive and look for? So there is no longer any need of even the prescribed task of worship and, therefore, of attachment to action. This is the point when attachments are completely broken. This is renunciation-(sanyas); and this is also achievement of yog. While a worshipper is still on his way and has not yet arrived at this point, there is nothing like renunciation. Krishn then speaks about the profit that accrues from the attainment of yog:

यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।
न ह्यसंन्यस्तसंकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥ २ ॥
आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।
योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥
यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।
सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥ ४ ॥

5. “Since the Soul enshrined in a man is his friend as well as foe, it is binding on a man to lift himself by his own effort rather than degrade himself.”

It is man's duty to work for the salvation of his Soul. He must not tempt him to damnation, for the embodied Soul is both his friend and enemy. Let us now see, in Krishn's words, when the Self is a friend and when an adversary.

6. “The Self is a friend to the man who has overcome his mind and senses, but he is an enemy to one who has failed to do so.”

To the man who has vanquished his mind and senses, the Soul within is a friend, but to the man who has not subdued his mind and senses, he is an enemy.

In the fifth and sixth verses Krishn thus insists repeatedly that a man should redeem his Self by his own effort. He must not degrade him, because the Self is a friend. Besides him, besides the Self, there is neither any friend nor any enemy. It is so because, if a man has restrained his mind and senses, his Soul acts as a friend and brings him the highest good. But, if a man's mind and senses are not restrained, his Soul turns into an enemy that drags him to re- birth in lower forms of life and to endless misery. Men are fond of saying, “I am Soul.” So there is nothing for us to worry about. We cite evidence from the Geeta itself. Isn't it said there, we ask, that weapons cannot pierce and fire cannot burn and wind cannot wither the Self? He, the deathless, immutable and universal, is therefore me. Believing so, we pay little heed to the warning in the Geeta that this Soul within us can also descend to an inferior, degraded level. Fortunately, however, he can also be saved and elevated; and Krishn has made known to Arjun the action which is worthy of being done and which leads the Soul to absolution. The following verse indicates the qualities of a benign, friendly Self.

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ ५ ॥

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।

अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥ ६ ॥

7. **“God is ever and inseparably present in the serene heart of the Self-abiding man who is unmoved by the contradictions of heat and cold, happiness and sorrow, and fame and infame.”**

God dwells inextricably in the heart of the man who rests in his own Self and reacts evenly to the dualities of nature such as heat and cold, pain and pleasure, and honour and humiliation. Perfect repose flows through one who has conquered the mind along with the senses. This is the stage when the Soul is liberated.

8. **“The yogi, whose mind is quenched with knowledge-both divine and intuitive, whose devotion is steady and constant, who has conquered his senses well, and who makes no distinction between objects ostensibly as different as earth, rock, and gold, is said to have realized God.”**

The yogi who has achieved this state is said to be endowed with yog. He has reached the crowning point of yog which Yogeshwar Krishn has portrayed in verses 7-12 in Chapter 5. Perception of God and the consequent enlightenment are knowledge. The worshipper is but grovelling in the mire of ignorance if there is even the slightest distance between him and the adored God and the desire to know him remains unfulfilled. What is called “intuitive” knowledge (vigyan)¹ here is knowledge of God’s functioning through things, acts, and relations (the manifest universe) which reveal how he is all-pervading, how he prompts, how he guides innumerable Souls simultaneously, and how he is knower of all times-past, present, and future. He begins to guide from the very moment when he makes his advent in a heart as the revered one, but the worshipper is unable to know this at the initial stage. It is only when he has reached the culmination of his contemplative exercise that

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥ ७ ॥

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।

युक्त इच्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकांचनः ॥ ८ ॥

1. An apparently different interpretation of the word will be found in chapter 7.

he gains full awareness of God's ways. This is vigyan. The heart of the man who is accomplished in yog is satiated with this achievement combined with his knowledge of God and accurate insight. Continuing with his account of this adept in yog, Krishn adds:

9. **“That man is indeed superior who view all with an equal mind: friends and foes, the antagonistic, indifferent, neutral or jealous, kinsmen, and the righteous as well as sinners.”**

After perceptions of God, a sage is both equal and even-minded. Krishn said in the last chapter that sages who are blessed with knowledge and discrimination regard with an impartial eye a Brahmin, an outcast, and animals so diverse as a cow, a dog, and an elephant. The verse under discussion complements what was said before. That man is doubtlessly a man of excellence who looks equally at all kinds of people, from the highest to the lowest, from the most virtuous to the most wicked, and from the most loving to the most malicious, irrespective of their feelings for him. He looks at the course of Souls within them rather than at their external deeds. The only difference he, therefore, sees between diverse beings is that while some have ascended to higher steps and gotten close to the state of purity, others have lagged behind and are still lingering on the lower steps. All the same, he sees the capacity for salvation in all.

In the next five verses, Krishn describes how a man comes to the possession of yog, how he practises yagya, the nature of the place where the deed is performed, the seat and the posture of the worshipper, the laws which regulate his food and recreation, and sleep and wakefulness, and the quality of effort required for the accomplishment of yog. The Yogeshwar has done this, so that we too are enabled to perform the appointed deed of yagya by following his precepts.

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥ ९ ॥

A brief review of the relevant points is necessary at this point. Yagya was named in Chapter 3 and Krishn said that yagya is the ordained action. In Chapter 4, then, he elaborated the nature of yagya in which the outgoing breath is sacrificed to the incoming breath, the incoming breath offered as oblation to the outgoing breath, and the mind is restrained through serenity of the vital life-winds. The precise meaning of yagya is, as we have seen, “worship,” the deed that enables the worshipper to traverse the path to the adored God. Krishn has also dwelt upon it in Chapter 5. But matters such as the seat of the worshipper, the place of worship, the posture of the worshipper, and the manner of worship have not yet been touched upon. It is only now that these subjects are taken up.

- 10. “The yogi, engaged in self-conquest, should devote himself to the practice of yog in loneliness in a secluded place, controlling his mind, body and senses, and rid of desire and acquisitiveness.”**

Being all alone in a place where there are no distractions, restraint of mind, body, and senses, and a complete rejection of attachments are all essential for a man who is engaged in the task of Self-realization. The following verse contains an account of the place and the seat which are conducive to the exercise.

- 11. “At a clean spot he should devise a seat of kush-grass² or deer-skin covered with a piece of cloth, which is neither too high nor too low.”**

Cleanliness of place is a question of sweeping and wiping it to keep it neat and tidy. In such a clean place, the worshipper should make for himself a seat of grass or deer-skin, on top of which there is spread a cover of fabric such as silk, or of wool. However, the seat may also be just a simple wooden board. But whatever it

योगी युञ्जत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।

एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीपरपरिग्रहः ॥ १० ॥

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।

नाच्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरतम् ॥ ११ ॥

2. Kush: a kind of grass considered holy and forming an essential requirement of Hindu religious ceremonies.

is, it should be firm, and neither too high nor too low. The intent behind all this is that something should be spread on the ground to cover it; it may be anything-skin, a mat, a piece of any kind of cloth, or even a wooden plank. It is important that the seat is not shaky. Again, it should be neither too high from the ground nor too low. My revered teacher, Maharaj Ji, used to sit on an about five-inch high seat. Once it so happened that some devotees got him a marble seat that was about a foot high. Maharaj Ji sat on it only once and said, "No, this is too high. A sadhu should not sit too high. It only makes them vain. That does not mean, though, that they should sit too low either, for that gives rise to a sense of inferiority-of contempt for oneself." So he had the marble seat put away in the forest. Maharaj Ji never went there, and neither does anybody else now. That really was an exercise in a practical lesson by the great man. So the seat of a worshipper should not be too high. If it is too high, vanity will overtake him even before he commences the task of divine adoration. After thus cleaning a spot and making a firm and reasonably elevated seat on it,-

12. "He should then sit on it and practise yog, concentrating his mind and restraining the senses, for self-purification."

Next, then, the posture of sitting (according to the provision, meditation is done in a sitting posture)-the manner in which the worshipper should sit while engaged in contemplation-is taken up.

13. "Holding his body, head, and neck firmly erect, his eyes should concentrate on the tip of the nose, looking neither right nor left."

In the course of meditation, the worshipper should keep his body, neck, and head straight, steady, and unmoving, like a column of wood as it were. Sitting erect and firm like this, he should keep his eyes fixed on the tip of his nose. Rather than meaning that he should watch the tip of the nose, the directive is that the eyes

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।

उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥ १२ ॥

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः ।

संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥ १३ ॥

should look straight in line with the nose. The tendency of eyes of restlessly flitting here and there must be curbed. Looking straight in line with the nose, the worshipper should sit unmoving, and-

- 14. “Abiding in continence, fearless, serene at heart, alert and restrained in mind, he should surrender himself firmly to me.”**

What actually does continence (brahmcharya vrat)-celibacy-mean? People usually say that it is restraint of the sexual urge. But it has been the experience of sages that such restraint is impossible so long as the mind is associated with objects, sights, touch, and sounds which inflame the urge. A true celibate (brahmchari) is rather one who is engaged in the task of realizing God (Brahm). The brahmchari is a man of Brahm-like conduct: a doer of the appointed task of yagya that leads men to attainment and ultimate dissolution in the eternal, immutable God. While doing it, the external sensations of touch and of all such contacts of the mind and other senses have to be excluded in order to concentrate the mind on contemplation of God, on the incoming and the outgoing breath, and on meditation. There are no external memories when the mind rests on God. So long as these memories last, the absorption in God is incomplete. Currents of deviation flow through the mind, not through the body. When the mind is wholly occupied with its adoration of God, not only does the sexual urge but all the other physical urges also cease. So dwelling in conduct that will take him to God, free from fear, in a state of repose, and with a restrained mind, the devoted worshipper should surrender himself totally to an accomplished teacher. But what is the outcome of all this?

- 15. “The yogi with a restrained mind who thus meditates on me incessantly at last attains to the sublime peace that dwells in me.”**

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।

मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत् मत्परः ॥ १४ ॥

यञ्जन्नैवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।

शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥ १५ ॥

The yogi who thus always reflects on Krishn, an ideal, accomplished teacher and dwells in God, with a controlled mind achieves his sublime peace. So Arjun is told to constantly devote himself to the task. The treatment of the subject is now almost complete. In the next two verses, Krishn then points out the importance of physical discipline, regulated food, and recreation for the worshipper who aims at the conquest of ultimate bliss.

16. “This yog, O Arjun, is neither achieved by one who eats too much or too little, nor by one who sleeps too much or too little.”

Moderation in food and sleep are necessary for a man who wishes to be a yogi. Now, if the man who eats and sleeps immoderately cannot achieve yog, who can?

17. “Yog, the destroyer of all grief, is achieved only by those who regulate their food and recreation, who strive according to their capacity, and who sleep in moderation.”

If a man eats too much, he is overtaken by lethargy, sleep, and negligence. And the act of meditation is simply not possible in such a condition. On the contrary, fasting will weaken the body and there will not be enough strength to even sit straight and firm. According to my revered teacher, one should eat a little less than one's need. Recreation, as understood here, is walking according to the available space. Some physical exercise is a necessity; circulation is slowed down in the absence of such exertion and one falls prey to illness. How much a man sleeps or remains awake is determined by age, food, and habit. The most exalted Maharaj Ji used to tell us that a yogi should sleep for four hours and be constantly engaged in meditation. However, men who curb their sleep by force soon lose their sanity. Along with all these, there should also be sufficient effort for the accomplishment of the undertaken task, for without this the act of worship cannot be carried

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।

न चाति स्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥ १६ ॥

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ १७ ॥

out well. He succeeds in achieving yog who excludes all thoughts of external objects from his mind and who is constantly engaged in meditation. This is what Krishn emphasizes again:

- 18. “A man is said to be endowed with yog when, restrained by the practice of selfless action and contented with Self, his mind is freed from all desires.”**

Thus, when disciplined by the practice of selfless action, the mind of a man is firmly centered on God and is indeed dissolved in him, and when there remains no desire, the worshipper is said to have attained to yog. Let us now see what a well-restrained mind is.

- 19. “An analogy is (usually) drawn between the lamp whose flame does not flicker because there is no wind and the fully restrained mind of a yogi engaged in contemplation of God.”**

When a lamp is kept where there is not a whiff of air, its wick burns steadily and the flame goes straight up-it does not tremble. So it is used as a simile for the subdued mind of a yogi who has completely given himself up to God. However, the lamp is just an illustration. The kind of lamp that is spoken of here is now going almost out of use. So let us take yet another example. When an incense- stick is burnt, its smoke rises straight up if it is undisturbed by wind. But this, again, is no more than an analogy between smoke and the mind of a yogi. True that the mind has been conquered and restrained, but it is still there. What spiritual splendour is realized when the restrained mind too is dissolved?

- 20. “In the state in which even the yog-restrained mind is dissolved by a direct perception of God, he (the worshipper) rests contented in his Self.”**

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।

निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥ १८ ॥

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नैगते सोपमा स्मृता ।

योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥ १९ ॥

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।

यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥ २० ॥

This state is achieved only by a constant and long practice of yog. In the absence of such exercise, there can be no restraint of the mind. So when the intellect, the refined mind that has been curbed by yog, also ceases to be because it is absorbed in God, the worshipper perceives him through his Self and abides with contented happiness in his own Self. He apprehends God, but he dwells contented in his Soul. In the moment of attainment he sees God, face to face as it were, but the very next moment he finds his own Self overflowing with the eternal glories of that God. God is immortal, constant, unmanifest, and vital; and now the worshipper's soul too is imbued with these divine attributes. True, but now it is also beyond thought. So long as desire and its urges exist, we cannot possess the Self. But when the mind is restrained and then dissolved by direct perception, the very next moment after the visionary experience the embodied Soul is endowed with all the transcendental qualities of God. And it is for this reason that the worshipper now lives happily and contented in his own Self. This Self is what he really is. This is the point of crowning glory for him. The idea is further developed in the next verse.

21. “After knowing God, he (the yogi) dwells for ever and unwavering in the state in which he is blessed with the eternal, sense-transcending joy that can be felt only by a refined and subtle intellect; and...”

Such is the state after attainment in which the worshipper lives for ever and from which he never strays. Moreover,-

22. “In this state, in which he believes that there can be no greater good than the ultimate peace he has found in God, he is unshaken by even the direst of all griefs.”

After he is once blessed with God's transcendental peace, settled firmly in the state of his realization, the yogi is freed from all grief, and now even the most painful sorrow cannot affect him. It is so because the mind, that feels, is now itself dissolved. So-

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।

वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥ २१ ॥

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।

यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥ २२ ॥

23. “It is a duty to practise this yog, untouched by miseries of the world, with vigour and determination, and without a sense of ennui.”

That which is equally free from worldly attraction and repulsion is named yog. Yog is experiencing the final beatitude. Attainment of the ultimate essence, that is God, is yog. Engaging in this yog without a sense of monotony or boredom (ennui) and with resolution, is a sacred obligation. He who is patiently engaged in selfless action is the one who succeeds in achieving yog.

24. “Abandoning all desire, lust, and attachment, and pulling in by an exercise of the mind the numerous senses from all sides, -”

It is man's duty to sacrifice all the desires that arise from will along with attachment and worldly pleasure and restrain well with his mind, the senses from straying here and there. And after having done this, -

25. “His intellect should also rein in the mind firmly and make it contemplate nothing except God and, thus step by step, he should proceed towards the attainment of final liberation.”

The final dissolution in God comes only gradually with the practice of yog. When the mind is fully under control, the Self is united with the Supreme Spirit. However, at the beginning, when the worshipper has just set out on the path, he has to concentrate his mind patiently on, and think of nothing else except, God. The way of this spiritual enterprise is that attainment comes only with constant application. But at the outset, the mind is restless and refuses to stay at one point. This is what Yogeshwar Krishn speaks of now.

तं विद्याद् दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥ २३ ॥
संकल्पभ्रवान्कामास्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।
मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥ २४ ॥
शनैः शनैरुपमेद्बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥ २५ ॥

26. “Doing away with the causes that make the inconstant and fickle wander among worldly objects, he should devote his mind to God alone.”

Strictly keeping out all allurements that tempt the changeable and restless mind to associate with worldly objects, the worshipper should try repeatedly to confine it to the Self. It is often contended that the mind should be let free to go wherever it tends to go. After all, where else can it go except to nature, which is also a creation of God? So if it roams amidst nature, it is not transgressing the bounds of God. But according to Krishn this is a misconception. There is no room for such beliefs in the Geeta. It is Krishn’s injunction that the very organs through which the mind strays here and there should be curbed in order to devote it solely to God. Restraint of mind is possible. But what is the consequence of this restraint?

27. “The most sublime happiness is the lot of the yogi whose mind is at peace, who is free from evil, whose passion and moral blindness have been dispelled, and who has become one with God.”

Nothing is superior to the happiness that comes to this yogi, for this is the happiness that results from identity with God; and this ultimate bliss comes only to that man who is perfectly at peace in his heart and mind, free from sin, and whose property of passion and moral blindness has been subdued. The same idea is stressed again.

28. “Thus constantly dedicating his Self to God, the immaculate yogi experiences the eternal bliss of realization..”

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चंचलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥ २६ ॥
प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतकल्मषम् ॥ २७ ॥
युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥ २८ ॥

The emphasis here is on sinlessness and continuous devotion. The yogi needs to possess these qualities before he can experience the blessedness of touching God and merging into him. So worship is a necessity.

29. “The worshipper, whose Self has achieved the state of yog and who sees all with an equal eye, beholds his own Self in all beings and all beings in his Self.”

Yog brings about the state in which the even-minded worshipper sees the extension of his Soul in all beings and the existence of all beings in his own Soul. The advantage of the perception of this unity of all beings is the burden of the next verse.

30. “From the man, who sees me as the Soul in all beings and all beings in me (Vasudev),³ I am not hidden and he is not hidden from me.”

God is manifest to the man who sees Him in all beings (that all beings are imbued with his Spirit) and all beings as abiding in Him. God also knows his worshipper in the same way. This is the direct encounter between the yogi and his prompter. This is the feeling of kinship between God and man, and salvation in this case arises from the feeling of oneness that brings the worshipper intimately close to his adored God.

31. ‘The even-minded yogi (who has known the unity of the individual Soul and the Supreme Spirit) who adores me (Vasudev), the Soul in all beings, abides in me no matter whatever he does.’

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ २९ ॥

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।

तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ ३० ॥

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥ ३१ ॥

3. Any descendant of Vasudev, specially Krishn.

The yogi who realizes the unity of the individual Soul and the Supreme Spirit has risen above plurality and known the unity that binds the whole universe. With this unified vision he contemplates God and none else, for there is no one except God left for him. Whatever mantle of ignorance covered him is now dissolved. So whatever he does, he does with the thought of God.

32. ‘The worshipper, O Arjun, who perceives all things as identical and regards happiness and sorrow as identical, is thought to be the most accomplished yogi.’

The man who realizes that this Self is also the Self of all other creatures, who makes no difference between himself and others, and for whom joy and grief are the same, is the one for whom there are no longer any distinctions nor discriminations. So, he is rightly regarded as a yogi who has attained to the highest excellence in his discipline.

But no sooner has Krishn concluded his discourse on the consequences of perfect mental restraint than Arjun expresses a fresh misgiving.

33. “Arjun said, ‘Since the mind is so restless, I cannot see, O Madhusudan, that it can dwell steadily and long in the Way of Knowledge which you have expounded to me as equanimity.’”

Arjun feels helpless. With his fickle and inconstant mind, he can foresee no prospect of a steady and constant adherence to the Path of Knowledge which Krishn has represented to him as the capacity to view all things equally.

अर्जुन उवाचः	आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन । सुखं वा यदि दुःखं योगी परमो मतः ॥ ३२ ॥ योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन । एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात्स्थितिं स्थिराम् ॥ ३३ ॥
--------------	---

- 34. “For I find restraining the mind as difficult as restraining the wind, because it is (equally) restless, turbulent, and mighty.”**

The mind is so fickle and restless (by nature it is something that churns and agitates), obstinate, and powerful. So Arjun is apprehensive that trying to restrain it is going to prove as futile as tying up the wind. Checking the mind is, therefore, as well nigh impossible as checking a storm. At this Krishn says,—

- 35. “The Lord said, ‘The mind is, O the mighty-armed, doubtlessly fickle and hard to restrain, but it is disciplined, O son of Kunti, by perseverance of effort and renunciation.’”**

Arjun is “mighty-armed” because he is capable of great accomplishment. The mind is indeed restless and most difficult to subdue, but as Krishn tells him, it is restrained by constant effort and giving up of all desire. Repeated endeavour to keep the mind steadily fixed on the object to which it should be dedicated is meditation (abhyas), whereas renunciation is the sacrifice of desire for or attachment to, all seen as well as heard sense-objects, which include pleasures of the world and also the promised joys of heaven. So, although it is difficult to curb the mind, it can be subdued by constant meditation and renunciation. Therefore,—

- 36. “It is my firm conviction that while the attainment of yog is most difficult for a man who fails to restrain his mind, it is easy for him who is his own master and active in the performance of the required action.”**

The achievement of yog is not really so difficult as Arjun has assumed. It is difficult, indeed impossible, for the man with an unrestrained mind. But it is within the reach of one who has

श्रीभगवानुवाचः चञ्जलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद् दृढम् ।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥ ३४ ॥
असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥ ३५ ॥
असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।
वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ॥ ३६ ॥

disciplined his thoughts and feelings, and is enterprising. So, Arjun should not abandon his endeavour for yog just because of his fear that it is something impossible to achieve. Yet, he responds rather despairingly to the encouragement as we may see from his next question.

37. “Arjun said, ‘What is the end, O Krishn, of the acquiescent worshipper whose inconstant mind has strayed from selfless action and who has, therefore, been deprived of perception which is the final outcome of yog?’”

Not all worshippers are rewarded with success in their attempt to achieve yog, although this does not mean that they have no faith in it. The practice of yog is often disrupted by the restless mind. But what happens to men who wished to be yogis but did not succeed because of their fickle minds?

38. “Is it, O the mighty-armed, that this deluded man with no haven to turn to is destroyed like scattered clouds, deprived of both Self-realization and worldly pleasures?”

Is this man truly like scattered patches of clouds because his mind is divided and he is confused? If a small patch of cloud appears in the sky, it can neither precipitate rain nor join other clouds, and within moments the wind destroys it. Very much similar to this puny, isolated cloud appears the passive and unpersevering man who begins with an enterprise and then discontinues his efforts. Arjun wishes to be enlightened on what finally happens to such a man. Is he destroyed? If so he has missed both Self-realization and worldly enjoyment. But what is his final end?

39. “You, O Krishn, are the most capable of fully resolving this doubt of mine because I cannot think of anyone else who can do it.”

अर्जुन उवाच:

अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः ।

अप्राप्य योग संसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति ॥ ३७ ॥

कच्चिन्नोभयविभ्रष्टश्छिन्नाश्रमिव नश्यति ।

अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥ ३८ ॥

एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमर्हस्यशेषतः ।

ऽत्वदन्यः संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते ॥ ३९ ॥

The ardour of Arjun's faith is remarkable. He is convinced that only Krishn can dispel his doubts. No one else can do it. So the accomplished teacher Krishn begins to resolve his devout pupil's misgivings.

40. "The Lord said, 'This man, O Parth, is destroyed neither in this world nor in the next because, my brother,⁴ one who performs good deeds never comes to grief.'"

Arjun is addressed as "Parth" because, as we have already seen, he has turned his mortal body itself into a chariot to proceed to his goal. And now Krishn tells him that the man who deviates from yog, because of his mind's fickleness, is not destroyed in this world or in the next. This is so because a doer of good deeds, of God-related deeds, is never damned. However, what is his destiny?

41. "The righteous man who deviates from the path of yog achieves celestial merits and pleasures for countless years after which he is reborn in the house of a virtuous and noble man (or fortunate and thriving man)."

What a paradox that the man who has fallen from yog enjoys in the worlds of the virtuous satisfaction of the same desires for sensual pleasure by which his restless mind was lured away from the appointed way in the mortal world! But this is God's synoptic way of providing him a glimpse of all he wanted, after which he is reborn in the house of a noble man—a man of righteous conduct (or a man of fortune).

42. "Or he is admitted to the family (kul) of discerning yogi and such a birth is truly the most rare in the world."

श्रीभगवानुवाच: पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।
न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिददुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥ ४० ॥
प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः ।
शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥ ४१ ॥
अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् ।
एतद्धि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥ ४२ ॥

4. The Sanskrit equivalent used here is "tatah," which is a term of love and endearment.

If the deviating Soul is not reborn in the house of a virtuous or affluent man, he is granted a birth which provides him admission to the family of a yogi. In the households of noble men, righteous influences are imbibed right from childhood. But, if not reborn in such houses, he gains admission not to the house of a yogi but to his kul as one of his pupils. Such were men like Kabir, Tulsidas, Raidas, Valmiki and others like them who, though not born in the houses of noble and affluent men, were admitted as pupils to the families of yogi. A birth in which the merits (sanskar) inherited from a previous life are further refined by association with an accomplished teacher, a realized sage, is indeed the most rare. Being born to the yogi does not mean being born as their physical offspring. Well might children be born to a yogi before he had given up home and regard him, out of attachment, as father, but in truth a sage has no one whom he can regard as his family. One hundred times the concern he has for his own children is the concern he has for his faithful and obedient pupils. They, the pupils, are his real Children.

Accomplished teachers do not admit pupils who are not endowed with the requisite sanskar. If my revered teacher, Maharaj ji, were inclined to converting people into sadhus, he could have had thousands of disenchanted men as his pupils, but he sent all the supplicants back home, paying fare to some of them, by intimating and writing letters to families in other cases, and sometimes by persuasion. He had inauspicious omens if some of the contenders were adamant on being admitted as pupils. An inner voice cautioned him that they were wanting in the qualities that make a sadhu and so he rejected them. Smarting under unbearable disappointment, a couple of the supplicants even resorted to the extreme step of taking their own life. Notwithstanding all this, Maharaj Ji would not admit pupils he did not find spiritually equipped to receive and profit by his teaching. After learning of the suicide by one whom he had rejected, he said, "I knew he was terribly alarmed, but I did not know he would kill himself. Had I known this, I would have taken him, for what greater harm could have been in that except that he would have persisted as a sinner?" The revered Maharaj Ji was a man of great compassion and yet he did not accept unworthy pupils. He admitted in all only about half a dozen pupils about whom he

had been told by his inner voice: "Today you are going to meet one who has fallen from yog. He has been groping about for several births. This is his name and this is how he looks. Accept him when he comes, impart the knowledge of God to him, and support him in his journey along the path." So he accepted only these chosen few. That his intuitions were correct may be seen from the fact that from among his chosen disciples we have now a sage living at Dharkundi, another one at Ansuiya, and two or three others who are engaged in the service of mankind elsewhere. They are all men who were admitted as pupils to the family of an accomplished teacher. To be blessed with a birth which provides such opportunity is indeed a most rare event.

43. "He naturally bears with him into his new birth the noble impressions (sanskar) of yog from his previous existence, and by dint of this he strives well for perfection (that comes from the realization of God)."

The merits he had earned in his previous body are spontaneously restored to him in his new birth, by virtue of which he sets out to achieve the ultimate excellence, that is God.

44. "Although he is lured by objects of sense, the merits of his previous life indeed draw him towards God and his aspiration for yog enables him to go beyond the material rewards promised by the Ved."

If he is born in a noble or thriving household and is subject to the influence of sense-objects, the traces of virtuous deeds inherited from his previous life yet draw him to the way that leads to God, and even with inadequate endeavour, he is enabled to rise above the fruits mentioned by Vedic compositions and attain to the state of salvation. This is the way of achieving the ultimate liberation. But this cannot be within a single life.

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम् ।
यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥ ४३ ॥
पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव हियते ह्यवशोऽपिसः ।
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥ ४४ ॥

45. “The yogi, who has purified his heart and mind through several births by intense meditation and thus rid himself of all sins, attains to the ultimate state of realizing God.”

Only an endeavour made over a number of lives effects this ultimate accomplishment. The yogi who practises diligent meditation is well rid of all kinds of impiety and then attains to the final beatitude. This is the way of attainment. Setting out on the path of yog with but a feeble effort and initiated into it when the mind is yet restless, he is admitted to the family of an accomplished teacher and, with the undertaking of meditation in life after life, he at last arrives at the point called salvation-the state in which the Soul is merged into God. Krishn also said before that the seed of this yog is never annihilated. If we just take a couple of steps, the merits earned from them are never destroyed. A man of true faith can embark upon the ordained action in every circumstance of worldly life. Whether you are a woman or a man, of whatever race or culture, if you are simply a human being, the Geeta is for you. The Geeta is for all mankind-for the man devoted to his family and the sanyasi, the educated and the unlettered, and for everyone. It is not only for that unique creature called a hermit (sadhu). This indeed is Lord Krishn's pronouncement.

46. “Since yogi is superior to men who do penance, or men who follow the path of discrimination, or men who desire the fruits of action, O Kurunandan, you should be a doer of selfless action.”

A yogi, doer of selfless action, surpasses all ascetics, men of knowledge as well as those of action. So Krishn's final counsel to Arjun is that he should be a yogi. This necessitates an appraisal of what all these types are

The ASCETIC is one who practises severe austerities and mortification of the body, mind, and senses to shape the yog which has not yet started flowing through him like an unimpeded current..

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।

अनेक-जन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ ४५ ॥

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।

कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥ ४६ ॥

The DOER is one who is engaged in the ordained task after knowing it, but who applies himself to it without either making an appraisal of his own strength or a sense of dedication. He is just engaged in the carrying out of an enterprise.

The MAN OF KNOWLEDGE, follower of the Way of Knowledge, is engaged in the performance of the deed of yagya only after gaining a full understanding of the process from a noble mentor, an accomplished teacher, as well as with a clear appraisal and judgement of his own strength; he holds himself responsible for both profit and loss in the undertaking.

The YOGI, doer of selfless action, performs the same prescribed task of meditation with a sense of total surrender to the adored one; the responsibility for the success of his yog is borne by God and the Yogeshwar. Even when there are prospects of failure he has no fear, because the God, whom he craves for, has taken upon himself the task of supporting and upholding him.

All the four types of action are noble as such. But the ascetic, the man of penance, is still engaged in equipping himself for yog. The doer, the man of action, engages in action just because he knows that it has to be undertaken. These two may fail, because they have neither a sense of dedication nor a proper discernment of their assets and liabilities. But the follower of the Way of Knowledge is aware of the means of yog and also of his own strength. He holds himself responsible for whatever he does. And the yogi, the doer of selfless action, has cast himself at the mercy of his adored God, and it is God who will protect and help him. Both of these tread well on the path of spiritual salvation. But the way on which the safety of the worshipper is looked after by God is the superior of the two. It is acknowledged by Krishn. So the yogi is the most superior of men and Arjun ought to be a yogi. He should engage in the task of performing yog with a sense of complete resignation.

The yogi is superior, but even better is that yogi who dwells in God through his Self. The last words of Krishn in the chapter are about this.

47. “Among all yogi I think that one the best who is dedicated to me and who, abiding in the Self, always adores me.”

Krishn regards, among all yogi-doers of selfless action, that one as the best who, immersed in his feeling of devotion, always adores him. Worship is not a matter of display or exhibition. Society may approve of such display, but God is offended. Worship is a secret, private activity, and it is undertaken within the heart. The ascent and descent of worship are events that belong to the innermost seats of thought and feeling.



Yogeshwar Krishn says at the beginning of the chapter that the man who performs the ordained, worthwhile task is a sanyasi. The yogi is also a doer of the same action. One does not become a yogi or a sanyasi just by giving up lighting of fire or undertaking of action. No one can be a sanyasi or yogi without sacrificing desires. We are not rid of will just by claiming that we do not have it. The man who wishes to possess yog should do what ought to be done, for freedom from desires comes only by a repeated and constant undertaking of this action and never before it. Renunciation is complete absence of desire.

The Yogeshwar has then pointed out that the Soul can be damned as well as saved. To the man who has conquered his mind and senses, his Self is a friend who brings the ultimate good. But to the man who has failed to restrain his mind and senses, the same Self is an enemy and his malicious conduct causes griefs. It is, therefore, an obligation, a sacred trust, that men act to uplift their Soul rather than degrade him.

Krishn has then described the yogi's way of life. About the place where yagya is performed, and the seat and posture of the worshipper, he has said that the place should be clean and secluded, and the seat made of fabric, deer skin or a mat of kush-grass. He has stressed the importance of moderation, according to the nature of the undertaken task, in endeavour, food, recreation,

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।

श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥ ४७ ॥

sleeping, and waking. He has compared the restrained mind of a yogi to the steady flame of a lamp in a place where there is no wind. Progressing even further than this, the climax-the stage of ultimate bliss-is reached when even the perfectly restrained mind is dissolved. The eternal joy which is free from all worldly attachment and repulsion is salvation. Yog is that which unites one with this state. The yogi who attains this state achieves an equal vision and looks equally at all beings. He looks at the Soul in others just as he looks at his own Soul. And so he achieves the ultimate peace. So yog is essential. Wherever the mind goes, it is our duty to pull it back and restrain it. Krishn admits that restraint of the mind is the most arduous, but he also assures that it is possible. Control of mind is achieved by practice and sacrifice of desires. Even the man whose endeavour is inadequate reaches, by constant meditation carried out over a number of lives, the point which is known as the ultimate state-the state of union with God. The perfect yogi is superior to all-ascetics, men of knowledge, and those who are just engaged in a business. So Arjun should be a yogi. With true dedication to Krishn, he should accomplish yog within his heart and mind. Thus in the chapter Krishn has chiefly stressed the importance of meditation for the attainment of yog.

**Thus concludes the Sixth Chapter in the Upanishad of the
Shreemad Bhagwad Geeta, on the Knowledge of the
Supreme Spirit, the Science of Yog, and the Dialogue
between Krishn and Arjun, entitled:
“Abhyas Yog” or “The yog of Meditation.”**

**Thus concludes Swami Adgadanand’s exposition
of the Sixth Chapter of the Shreemad Bhagwad Geeta in
“Yatharth Geeta”.**

HARI OM TAT SAT